

## Message Text

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12  
ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 L-01 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05 CIAE-00

SAJ-01 SP-02 PRS-01 /038 W  
----- 040980

R 161725Z JUL 76  
FM AMEMBASSY ROME  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8915  
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 11540

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR, VT, CZ  
SUBJ: VATICAN-CZECHOSLOVAK TALKS JULY 5-9

FROM AMBASSADOR LODGE'S OFFICE

REF: ROME 11311

1. VATICAN SOURCE HAS TOLD US THAT THERE WAS GOOD OVERALL PROGRESS IN CZECH-VATICAN DISCUSSIONS HELD IN PRAGUE JULY 5-9. VATICAN PARTICIPANTS, POGGI AND BUKOVSKY, WERE RECEIVED IN AN ATMOSPHERE CHARACTERIZED AS ONE OF THE MOST OPEN AND FRIENDLY SINCE DISCUSSION WERE INITIATED A DECADE AGO. CZECHS APPEARED IN A HURRY TO WRAP UP NEGOTIATIONS AND, THEREFORE, WERE WILLING TO YIELD ON MANY ISSUES WHICH VATICAN CONSIDERED SIGNIFICANT.

2. ACCORDING TO SOURCE, CONCRETE AGREEMENTS WERE REACHED ON FOLLOWING ITEMS: (1) CREATION OF NEW ECLESIASTICAL PROVINCE OF SLOVAKIA TO INCLUDE SIX DIOCESES AND TO BE HEADED BY AN ARCHBISHOP; (2) APOSTOLIC ADMINISTRATOR TOMASEK IS TO BE ELEVATED TO STATUS OF FULL ARCHBISHOP OF PRAGUE (AND THEREBY PRIMATE OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA) AND TO HAVE AN AUXILIARY BISHOP.

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3. VATICAN APPARENTLY MADE FOLLOWING TWO CONCESSIONS: (1) IT

AGREED TO REVEAL NAMES OF THREE BISHOPS OF "CLANDESTINE CHURCH", NAMES WHICH, ACCORDING TO SOURCE, WERE ALREADY KNOWN TO CZECH AUTHORITIES, AND TO COUNSEL THEM TO MODERATE OPPOSITION TO REGIME; (2) VATICAN ALSO AGREED TO CONSIDER FOR ELEVATION TO STATUS OF BISHOP, VICARS (PACEM IN TERRIS PRIESTS) WHO ARE ALREADY ADMINISTRATORS, PROVIDED THEY ARE "ECCLESIASTICALLY QUALIFIED".

4. COMMENT: VATICAN SOURCE LENT FURTHER CREDENCE TO STATEMENT OF FRANCE AMBASSADOR (REFTEL) THAT SOVIETS NUDGED CZECHS TO BE FORTHCOMING. VATICAN SOURCE REVEALED THAT PRIOR TO POGGI'S DEPARTURE FOR PRAGUE, VATICAN FORMIN CASAROLI HELD SERIES OF SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS WITH CZECH AND USSR AMBASSADORS TO ITALY TO URGE NEED FOR BREAKING CONTINUING DEADLOCK IN DIALOGUE BETWEEN HOLY SEE AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA. APPARENTLY, FEW DAYS BEFORE POGGI'S DEPARTURE, USSR AMBASSADOR GAVE ENCOURAGING SIGNAL TO CASAROLI. OUR SOURCE EXPECTS THAT ACCORS WILL BE FINALIZED IN OCTOBER WHEN GOC DELEGATION COME TO ROME FOR RESUMPTION OF TALKS WITH VATICAN OFFICIALS. VOLPE

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** FOREIGN RELATIONS, POLICIES, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, MEETING REPORTS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 16 JUL 1976  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** MartinML  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1976ROME11540  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D760275-0754  
**From:** ROME  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Legacy Key:** link1976/newtext/t19760750/aaaabrpo.tel  
**Line Count:** 80  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION EUR  
**Original Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** LIMDIS  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 2  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** CONFIDENTIAL  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** LIMDIS  
**Reference:** 76 ROME 11311  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** MartinML  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 14 APR 2004  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <14 APR 2004 by CollinP0>; APPROVED <04 AUG 2004 by MartinML>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
04 MAY 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** VATICAN-CZECHOSLOVAK TALKS JULY 5-9 FROM AMBASSADOR LODGE'S OFFICE  
**TAGS:** PFOR, VT, CZ  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006